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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL  
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UNCLAS ADANA 0638

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: [SOCI](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: POLICE FOIL APPARENT PKK ESCAPE ATTEMPT IN  
DIYARBAKIR

REF: ISTANBUL 5140

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: DIYARBAKIR POLICE OCTOBER 23 DISCOVERED A 120 FOOT TUNNEL INTO A PRISON WHICH HOUSES MANY CONVICTED OF SUPPORT FOR THE OUTLAWED PKK. AUTHORITIES IMMEDIATELY ORDERED THE TRANSFER OF 120 PRISONERS FROM DIYARBAKIR TO ESKISEHIR, WHICH TRIGGERED A FIGHT BETWEEN INMATES AND GUARDS IN WHICH 20 PRISONERS WERE WOUNDED. END SUMMARY.

¶2. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, POLICE ACTED ON A TIP EITHER FROM A PKK SUSPECT BEING INTERROGATED OR FROM A PRISONER. THEY FOUND A TUNNEL (VARIOUSLY ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN 40 AND 60 METERS LONG) STRETCHING FROM A HOUSE IN THE SLUM (GECECONDO) AREA OF DIYARBAKIR TOWARD THE INTERIOR OF THE PRISON. ABOUT FORTY ADDITIONAL METERS OF TUNNELING WOULD HAVE BEEN NECESSARY TO REACH THE INTERIOR OF THE PRISON.

¶3. SECURITY AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCED THE TRANSFER OF 120 OF THE PRISONERS IN DIYARBAKIR TO ESKISEHIR. AMONG THEM WAS THE NOTED WOMAN PKK MILITANT, SAKINE POLAT, SENTENCED TO 56 YEARS. THE INMATES PROTESTED THE TRANSFER, AND 20 WERE WOUNDED IN THE SCUFFLE WHICH ENSUED. A NUMBER OF THE PRISONERS VOWED TO BEGIN A HUNGER STRIKE TO DRAMATIZE THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE TRANSFERS. POLICE HAVE ALSO ROUNDED UP FOR INTERROGATION APPROXIMATELY 30 PEOPLE LIVING NEAR THE HOUSE WHERE THE TUNNEL WAS DISCOVERED.

¶4. COMMENT: RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS ABOUT MILITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRISON (ITS FORMER DIRECTOR WAS MURDERED IN ISTANBUL OCTOBER 23 IN APPARENT REPRISAL FOR HIS ACTIVITIES, REFTTEL.) THE GOT TRANSFERRED THE PRISON TO CIVILIAN CONTROL EARLY THIS SUMMER.

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